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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 21, 2020

County COVID-19 Cases surpass 200 – new death reported.

The City Cowley County Health Department continues to test exposed or symptomatic residents for COVID-19 in the community. On average we are testing 250 people per week in the County. As of Friday August 21, 2020, 3,522 people in Cowley County have been tested for the virus. 209 positive cases have been found through testing since March of this year. Today we learned that one person who had been struggling with the virus for several weeks and was hospitalized passed away. Infection with SARS-CoV-2 was the major factor for the death. This brings the death toll for Cowley County to 3 people.

Currently there are 39 people who have the virus and are recovering in Cowley County. 167 people have contracted the virus and successfully recovered.

Contact tracing and disease investigation indicates that the spread of the virus continues to be communal in nature and is being passed through person to person close contact.

New cases have continued to occur on a regular basis in Cowley County. The Health Department is offering the following data to help illustrate the current illness activity levels.

Total Cases	Male	Female			
209	101	108			
Location	67005	67156	Other		
	154	40	15		
Ethnicity	Hispanic/Latino	Not Hispanic	Other		
	98	82	29		
Age Distribution	0-18	19-30	31-50	51-65	65+
	20	51	73	45	20

The data continues to indicate that there is a significantly higher incidence of illness in the Arkansas City vicinity when compared to other communities in the county.

Many ongoing cases in the community continue to trace back to the late May 2020 outbreak attributed to social activity and the rapid spread to the local employee workforce. That outbreak has spread systemically to numerous people in the county and into neighboring counties to the west of Cowley County specific to employment.

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There is an ongoing outbreak at the local state correctional facility that is being managed by the State Department of Corrections and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

The Health Department continues to record isolated cases where social activity has been the exposure pathway. These activities have all been outside of Cowley County where residents have participated and then returned home and became ill. Over the past few weeks more than five pre-op tests on patients needing surgery but who were otherwise asymptomatic have been found.

Most people who become ill recover within a 14-day period and can return quickly to normal activity. Nevertheless, it is imperative that people still follow the isolation and quarantine orders they receive when tested, which sadly are often overlooked or ignored.

All Cowley County schools are set to re-open soon and it is extremely important for everyone to follow the public health safety guidelines in order to ensure that students and teachers can remain healthy and safe this year,

Please do not take health risks that are unnecessary. If you feel ill, stay home do not continue to go to work or interact in the community, (i.e. shopping, meetings, social interactions) and spread the virus to others. In order to avoid contracting this virus consider every person you come in contact with as potentially being ill. Observe appropriate social distance, wear a mask when in areas where people are gathered and you cannot socially distance, wash and sanitize your hands often. If you develop symptoms of illness contact the Health Department and get tested.

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